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ENG 5000-001: Intro to Methods in English Studies

Angela Vietto
Eastern Illinois University

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English 5000 | Fall 2015

Methods & Issues in English Studies

Prof. Angela Vietto
3345 Coleman
Text/cell: 217-549-3203*
arvietto@eiu.edu

Office hours:
M 12-1, T 11-1, WF 2-3
*and by appointment; text
or call to schedule **

English Studies is not a single thing. From literary study to linguistics, creative writing to rhetoric and composition, even the traditional field of English studies has had multiple sub-disciplines. Though there had always been theories of language and literature, in the 1970s and 1980s, interest in philosophy and social sciences brought a whole realm of “theory” to apply to these traditional fields and “theory” became in some ways a subject of study itself. The newest claimants to our attention include digital humanities, new media, algorithmic approaches to literary analysis, and neuroscience-inflected criticism.

Obviously, a single course can't take on all of these areas in detail. My intention instead is to prepare you for the rest of the MA program by focusing on what the subdisciplines have in common. Here's what the course aims to do:

- Consider how and why literary study is valuable in itself and as a backdrop for the study of rhetoric and composition, for the work of creative literary production, and for the work of professional writers.
- Familiarize seminar members with the main trends in theory since the mid 20th century, both as potential methods for our own use and to enrich understanding of secondary sources
- Explore the process of research and the standards of research at the graduate level
- Practice making an original contribution to research, from generating an idea to presenting it publicly.
- Learn about genres of writing that English studies scholars use across our subdisciplines
 - Proposals (for conferences, thesis projects, grants)
 - Literature reviews (a subgenre that appears in scholarly articles, scholarly theses, seminar papers, introductions to creative theses, and proposals of various sorts)
 - Interpretive arguments of various lengths and presented in various formats

Textbooks from TRS

Hawthorne, *House of the Seven Gables*
Larsen, *Quicksand* and *Passing*
Parker, *How to Interpret Literature*
Wharton, *Summer*

Students with disabilities If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

* I happily accept calls or text messages at my personal cell number between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Assignments and Grading

Assignment	Weight	Final Grading	
		Scale	
Short writings / exercises	15%	93-100	A
Seminar contribution	20%	85-92	B
Annotated bibliography	10%	77-84	C
Literature review and proposal	10%	76-69	D
Conference paper	15%	68 and below	F
Seminar paper	20%		
Symposium presentation	10%		

Short writings / exercises: During the first half of the semester, I will ask you to complete short writings or other exercises. In most cases I will ask that these be posted in D2L by Monday, so that classmates can read them online and/or I can print and bring copies to class. These writings will help to focus our discussions.

Seminar contribution: The expectations for graduate student participation in a seminar are substantially different than the expectations for undergraduate class participation. The idea of a seminar is that each member of the group is contributing to the education of his/her peers, so you should come to class as prepared as if you were going to be required to lead the class yourself. In addition, the graduate faculty expect that graduate students are devoted to their studies and that absences will be extremely rare.

Annotated bib, literature review, conference paper, seminar paper: These assignments will build on one another, focusing on a topic of your choice that is related to at least one of the literary works or authors we will read together.

Symposium presentation: During the last week of class and finals week, our class will present the results of their research at public presentations to which the faculty and students of the department at large will be invited.

D2L: An online discussion board will be available for discussion of readings during the week. Course handouts and PDFs of many articles we will read in common will be saved in our class D2L space, along with other materials that you might need. I will also make your grades available in D2L and ask you to submit many of your assignments online. If submitting assignments online is a problem, please feel free to speak with me about it; we'll find a solution.

The fine print

Academic Integrity Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

The English Department Statement on Plagiarism Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism "The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Office of Student Standards. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

Preliminary Schedule

Aug 25	Introductions
Sept 1	Parker chapters 1, 2, 3; Hawthorne, "Wakefield" (1835); Wharton, "A Journey" (1899); Larsen, "Sanctuary" (1930)
Sept 8	Parker 4, 5 and critical articles TBA
Sept 15	Parker 6, 7, 8 and critical articles TBA
Sept 22	Parker 9, 10 and <i>Summer</i> and critical article TBA
Sept 29	Parker 11, 12 and <i>Passing</i> and critical articles TBA
Oct 6	<i>House of the Seven Gables</i> and critical articles TBA
T Oct 13	Reading week: history and theory.
T Oct 20	Paper proposals due; individual conferences; readings TBA
T Oct 27	Annotated bibliography due
T Nov 3	Literature review and abstract due
T Nov 10	First draft of symposium paper due
T Nov 17	Full drafts due, conferences later this week
T Dec 1	Last class meeting revised draft of symposium paper due
T Dec 8	Symposium Part I complete draft of seminar paper due
T Dec 15	Symposium Part II
R Dec 17	Final version of seminar paper due